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REPORT

OF

M. P. TRIBBLE,

COMMISSIONER OF CONFEDERATE ROLLS,

TO THE

General Assembly.

1903.

COLUMBIA, S. C.
THE STATE COMPANY, STATE PRINTERS.
1904.

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REPORT.

To His Excellency, D. C. Heyward, Governor of South Carolina:

Sir: Under authority of an executive order recorded by your Excellency on the 25th day of March, 1903, I, on the 1st day of June, 1903, entered upon the work of collecting data for the compilation and publication of the "Confederate Roster and Records" of South Carolina.

The work of compiling and publishing these records will be undertaken by the War Department according to and by the authority of an Act of Congress passed in March, 1903.

When entering upon the work assigned me I found on file in this office about six hundred manuscript rolls and other records which had been compiled from time to time by the surviving veterans of the Civil War. The work of compiling the rolls and securing other data pertaining to Confederate history was begun by the "Survivors Association" in 1869, at Charleston, S. C. Much credit is due the late Edward McCrady of Charleston for the prominent part which he took in securing valuable historical documents and rolls. Prof. W. J. Rivers, in his "Account of the Raising of Confederate Troops," has laid the foundation for the work of the Confederate historian. Much valuable work has also been done by Generals Manigault and Farley, J. B. Kershaw, and Col. John P. Thomas. I am pleased to say that the work done by Colonel Thomas, especially, in connection with securing rolls and records has been of great value and justly deserves commendation.

When I took charge of the work I found the rolls practically complete, with the exception of individual records on a great many of them. I sent out several thousand circular letters to survivors over the State urging them to send in to this office anything that they had in their possession in the shape of rolls or other data that would assist in the compilation of the Confederate records. I also had published in nearly every newspaper in the State the circular letter, together with a letter from Gen. F. C. Ainsworth, of the War Department. As a result of this a great many rolls were received at this office which were carefully compared with the rolls on file here.

I find that the work of compiling the rolls is greatly hindered on account of the numerous changes that were made in the Confederate

organizations. In 1861 most of the troops in the State enlisted for twelve months; at the expiration of their term of service they re-enlisted and were formed into new companies and regiments. Sometimes a company was transferred from one regiment to another, and with no official records it is almost impossible to trace the men composing the different companies.

It has not been my purpose, however, to make a compilation of the troops, as that will be done by the War Department. According to instruction received from General Ainsworth I am directed to collect the data and send it to Washington, where the compilation and publication will be done.

According to the interpretation made by General Ainsworth of the Bill passed by Congress in March, 1903, nothing but original or contemporaneous documents will be accepted by the War Department for publication. Knowing if that interpretation of the Bill be adhered to that South Carolina would be almost entirely left out, I placed myself in communication with the Commissioners of several other Southern States. As a result of this a convention was held in Atlanta, Ga., on the 20th and 21st of June last. At this meeting a committee was appointed to draft resolutions memorializing Congress at the next session to so change or amend the Bill as to allow the acceptance of such rolls as can be made up by the surviving members of the Confederate States Army. This step has been approved by General Ainsworth, who has the work in charge.

Since beginning my work I have collected eighty-seven original rolls and have added much valuable data to the rolls already on file by completing some that were incomplete as to individual records.

There are on file now in the office of the "Commissioner of Confederate Rolls" the following rolls:

Manuscript rolls—Infantry	405	
Manuscript rolls—Artillery	46	
Manuscript rolls—Cavalry	72	
Manuscript rolls—Miscellaneous	95	618
Original rolls—Infantry	165	
Original rolls—Artillery	44	
Original rolls—Cavalry	21	
Original rolls—Miscellaneous	11	241
Total number of rolls		859

The aggregate number of names on rolls 67,819, which, according to estimates made by others, familiar with Confederate history of the State, represents, approximately, the full strength of the troops serving from this State.

In connection with my report, I beg leave to mention a very valuable addition to the Confederate records which was contributed by Mrs. J. H. Foster, of Lancaster. The compilation consists of a complete history and roster of the eight companies from Lancaster County, and in addition an account of the movements of both the Confederate and Federal armies in this State. The whole work, which consists of about 230 pages, was compiled from original documents, and is authentic in every particular.

This office is also indebted to Mrs. James P. Adams, of Congaree, for roster and history of Adams' Battalion of Cavalry.

All the rolls and records in this office will be carefully packed and shipped to Washington. Everything will be returned as soon as the War Department has completed the compilation and publication.

Through the courtesy of Mr. A. B. Andrews, vice-president of the Southern Railway, I secured a pass over their lines, enabling me to visit various parts of the State in my work of securing data for the compilation of Confederate rolls.

I have had associated with me Mr. T. J. Pyles, who has proven to be a valuable and efficient assistant.

There having been no appropriation made by the General Assembly for the prosecution of this work, I have undertaken it at my own expense, trusting that a suitable appropriation will be made at the next session of the Legislature.

Having fulfilled to the full measure of my ability and my opportunity the trust committed to me by your Excellency, I now submit to you my report, with a high appreciation of the interest that your Excellency has shown in my labors.

I have the honor to be, yours respectfully,

M. P. TRIBBLE,

Com. Confederate Rolls, S. C.

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